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'A STEP FORWARD'

CIA Eases Stand on Research Role; Scholars Cautiously Welcome Shifts

By ANGUS PAUL

The Central Intelligence Agency has made changes in its policies that could result in fewer scholars' having to submit manuscripts for prepublication review and in more scholars' being able to acknowledge publicly the agency's role in their work.

"We have decided that our interest in obtaining the cooperation of this country's scholars and allaying the misunderstandings and suspicions that have grown out of our earlier approach warrants at least some change in our policy," Robert M. Gates, the C.I.A.'s deputy director for intelligence, said in a panel discussion at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

"Accordingly, C.I.A. will henceforth permit acknowledgment of our funding of research that is later independently published by a scholar unless (1) the scholar requests privacy or (2) we determine that formal, public association of C.I.A. with a specific topic or subject would prove damaging to the United States."

Scholars generally welcomed the shift but emphasized that it did not eliminate potential conflicts between academic freedom and C.I.A.-supported research.

The revisions constitute "a step forward," John Shattuck, vice-president for government, community, and public affairs at Harvard, said in an interview. Mr. Shattuck was a participant in the panel discussion at which Mr. Gates spoke.

"What Mr. Gates had to say indicated that the C.I.A. is taking account of fundamental values that are at stake for a university," he said.

But authority that the agency still reserves, he added, could be "a serious impediment to the independent judgment of scholars."

The third member of the panel, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., professor of government at Harvard, said in an interview that the C.I.A. policy revisions had moved the agency "significantly

in the right direction, but we won't know how significantly until we see how they're implemented."

Harvard itself has had two recent controversies over the involvement of faculty members with the C.I.A.

On the day Mr. Gates spoke, the *Crimson*, the Harvard student newspaper, revealed that Samuel P. Huntington, a professor of government and director of the university's Center for International Affairs, had helped prepare a paper for the C.I.A.

An earlier case involved Nadav Safran, a professor of government who resigned as director of the university's Center for Middle Eastern Studies following an investigation into his accepting two grants from the C.I.A. The resignation is effective at the end of this semester.

Even before the controversy that resulted from the Safran case, Mr. Gates said, "we revised our contract language with respect to prepublication review."

Under the policy, a scholar who has had a C.I.A. contract to do research on a certain topic, and who wants to publish an article or book on that topic, is required by the agency to submit his manuscript for review only if he has had access to classified information, said Kathy Pherson, a C.I.A. spokesman.

Previously, a scholar had to submit for review any work on a topic he had researched for the agency, even if he had not had access to classified data, she said.

Reaction Is Mixed

Mr. Nye praised that narrowing of the review requirement, but he argued that it could be narrowed further, so that a scholar would, for example, have the right to determine which parts of his manuscript he would submit to the agency.

Mr. Shattuck, however, said that any effort by a sponsor of research "to restrict or review publication is pushing up against the freedom of information and open inquiry."

Mr. Gates said the Directorate of Intelligence, one of the C.I.A.'s four departments, "now explicitly tells

any organization or individual organizing a conference on our behalf that the participants in the conference should be informed in advance of our sponsoring role."

Informing conference participants has never been prohibited by the agency, Ms. Pherson said.

One issue in Mr. Safran's case was his failure to disclose promptly enough that the C.I.A. had provided a \$45,700 grant to help pay for a conference that the Middle Eastern studies center held last October.

The change in policy on revealing the C.I.A.'s sponsorship of research is progress, Mr. Safran said, "but I'm in agreement with the New York *Times* editorial, which says that the escape clauses the agency left to itself take away much of the concession and leave the problem unresolved."

The *Times* editorial, published on February 18, said, "The escape hatches puncture the credibility of the C.I.A.'s avowals of candor. Given its reflexive passion for secrecy, the agency can be counted on to scent damage in the most innocuous information."

Mr. Nye said Mr. Gates did not seem to intend his exception on damage to the national interest to be interpreted broadly. If it were, Mr. Nye added, the agency's shift in policy would prove insignificant.

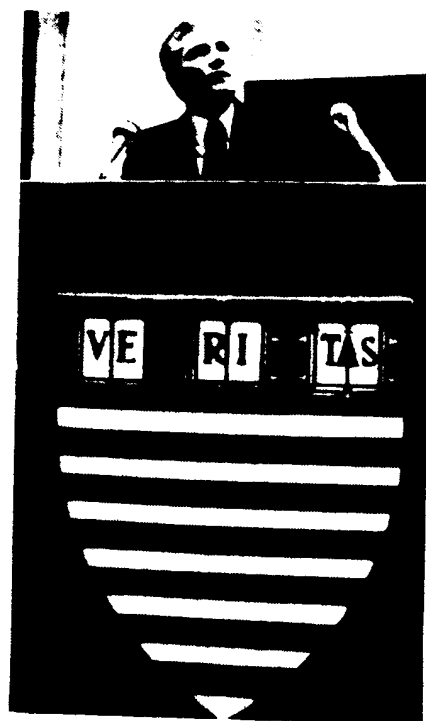
The C.I.A. expects to apply the new policy "sensibly, not capriciously," Mr. Gates said through Ms. Pherson.

Nonetheless, Mr. Nye said, the agency should place no restrictions on the acknowledgment of C.I.A. involvement with research, and that scholars should not choose to work with the agency if they were told of the possibility of such restrictions.

The difficulty for a university, said Mr. Shattuck, is to reach a consensus on campus regulations that protect "the spirit of open inquiry" on one hand, and "the freedom of association" on the other.

"We need," Mr. Nye said, "to find principles that allow us to reconcile our obligations as citizens and as scholars."

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JOE WRINN
CIA's Robert M. Gates at Harvard:
"The university cannot prosper and
protect freedom of inquiry oblivious
to the fortunes of the nation."